GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4666
ANSWERED ON:19.12.2001
THEFT/TRAFFIC OF NUCLEAR MATERIALS
B.K. PARTHASARATHI

Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been cases of theft or traffic of nuclear materials and radio active resources in the country during the past three years; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINIS OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE)

(a) & (b) There have been no cases of theft of nuclear material from nuclear installations. However, there were a few instances of alleged thefts from hospitals/industrial units of nuclear materials (depleted uranium) and radioactive sources during the past three years. Depleted uranium was recovered in all the cases (3 nos.) and radioactive sources were recovered in four out of six cases. The details are as follows:

Nuclear Materials (Depleted Uranium)

1. Trombay Police arrested two persons from Chembur, Mumbai on May 1, 2000 and recovered 8.3 kg. of depleted uranium.

2. Hyderabad Police is reported to have apprehended two persons possessing depleted uranium. The total amount was 25.9 kg.

3. Police at Kochi, Kerala on November 11, 2000 arrested eight persons with about 2.2 kg. of depleted uranium.

Industrial Radiography

1. In September 1999, 74 GBq Ir-192 source in SPEC-2 Exposure device was sent to Trombay for disposal. The source was lost in transit and could not be recovered.

2. On May 2, 1998, an Ir-192-296 GBq source was stolen from the storage at Bharuch. It was recovered from a scrap dealer`s shop by Police after two days.

3. In January 1999 an Ir-192 source of 165 GBq activity was stolen from storage room at site. It was recovered by Police after two days.

4. In January 1999 an Ir-192 source of 1.295 TBq was stolen from storage at Haldia. It was recovered after ten days after extensive search.

Nucleonic Gauge

5. In October 1998, 1.85 GBq Am-241-Be neutron source of amoisture depth guage was stolen from field laboratory and not recovered.